

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MANILA 09788 270545Z

14

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSCE-00 NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-03 RSR-01

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P 270332Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7583

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

S E C R E T MANILA 9788

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINS, RP

SUBJECT: MUSLIM PROBLEMS IN THE SOUTH

1. IN DISCUSSING THE MOSLEM PROBLEM IN MINDANAO ON AUGUST 26, PRESIDENT MARCOS SHOWED A SURPRISING SYMPATHY FOR THE REBELS AND A CAUSTIC CRITICISM OF HIS FELLOW CHRISTIANS. HE PLACED THE BASIC BLAME FOR THE CURRENT SITUATION ON CHRISTIAN GREED FOR MOSLEM LANDS AND THE INSENSITIVITY OF CHRISTIAN GOVERNORS, MILITARY LEADERS, AND CONSTABULARY. HOWEVER, HE FELT RECENT EVENTS HAD MADE MATTERS SO COMPLEX THAT IT WOULD NOT BE EASY TO REDRESS THE SITUATION, ESPECIALLY IN COTABATO, BY THE SIMPLE ISSUANCE OF EDICTS AND DECREES.

2. HE COMPARED THE PROBLEM IN COTABATO TO OUR PROBLEM WITH THE INDIANS AT WOUNDED KNEE. HE SAID THE OLDER DATUS WOULD LIKE TO REACH AGREEMENTS WITH MANILA, BUT WERE INHIBITED BY YOUNG FIREBRANDS, MANY OF WHOM HAD FOREIGN TRAINING (CAIRO) AND SUPPORT (SYRIA AND MALAYSIA). HIS

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RECENT DECREE SUBDIVIDING THE MINDANAO PROVINCES WAS AN

EFFORT TO MAKE THE PROBLEM MORE TRACTABLE, BUT HE FELT THAT ONLY A LONG-TERM EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORT WOULD MEET THE BASIC ISSUES. IN THE LONG RUN, THERE MIGHT ALSO BE A NEED TO GIVE SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO MOSLEM LAWS AND CUSTOMS OUTSIDE THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PHILIPPINE LEGAL SYSTEM.

3. FINALLY, HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE REGARDED THE MINDANAO PROBLEM AS MORE FUNDAMENTALLY SIGNIFIANT THAN THE SULUS. HE CONSIDERS THE SULU PROBLEM TO BE THE RESULT OF OUTSIDE AGITATION FROM SABAH. HE CONSIDERS MINDANAO TO BE AN INTERNAL FILIPINO PROBELM WHICH COULD HAVE SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES IF UNRESOLVED.
SULLIVAN

SECRET

NNN

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